**Get in touch**
If any of our pictures bring back memories for you, let us know by emailing james.milner@reachplc.com

## Final act for Theatre Cinema after 42 years – 1938

AFTER a successful fortnight of the pantomime, 'Cinderella,' the Theatre Cinema is closing down without any indication as to what its future may be.

It was 42 years ago that the New Theatre was opened and has had a great history.

Many of our leading actors have appeared and all tastes catered for – comedy, drama, musicals and grand opera.

It was the coming of films that changed the theatre's fortunes and, after a hopeless struggle, it was converted into a cinema with an occasional week of variety.

## Collapsed roof wakes residents – 1936

AN amazing roof collapse awakened residents in Broad Street, East Road, shortly after midnight.

When they rushed into the street they found that the whole of the roof of a storehouse and garage belonging to Messrs Whitehead, the fruiterers, had crashed down on the contents of the building.

It is thought the long-continued rain and damp weather may have affected the wooden beams. One of the three lorries in the building had the engine badly knocked about and some boxes of fruit were smashed by beams and tiles.

It is said that when the old All Saints Church opposite St John's College was pulled down, the stone was auctioned off and many loads of it went into the building of this store house.

The elderly of Great Gransden at around 1908
CN

## Too much time spent on traffic management – 1929

TOO much time is now taken up by the police in traffic management, which is not a primary police duty; it could be controlled by the RAC and AA patrols, county councillors argued.

They were better than the police because they had motors. It would be difficult to make arrangements with the associations and would probably mean the motor scouts becoming special constables.

Others felt traffic control should be dealt with by a special police, though the time was not ripe for them to increase the numbers. But Col Tebbutt said he would not like to see two sorts of police in the country.

The curtain came down on the Theatre Cinema in 1938
CN

## Liquid fuel engine explodes at Ely station – 1909

A REMARKABLE accident occurred at Ely station when the tar in the tender of a liquid fuel engine exploded with disastrous results.

The top of the tender was blown clean over the locomotive and fell ten yards away.

The driver was thrown off the engine and escaped with a few bruises but the fireman was seriously injured: he was hurled on to the roof of Coote and Warren's coal building, then rolled onto a truck of coal and was found some time later unconscious.

## Cambridge free library's new lending system – 1909

CAMBRIDGE free library is to introduce a system of 'card charging' in place of the present system of 'ledger charging' for the issue of books.

This is the most up-to-date and efficient method of issue known and will be a boon to borrowers and staff alike.

In another reform that will meet with general approval any burgess may now borrow on signing a 'burgess's voucher' rather than get the signature of a guarantor for the safe return of the books.

## Pensioners can now end their days in comfort – 1909

CAMBRIDGESHIRE took the advent of Old Age Pensions with very little fuss.

For the first time in history, veterans of toil claimed from the country the wherewithal to end their days in comparative comfort, free from the haunting dread of having to enter the 'house.'

The pension varies from one to five shillings a week through the issue of what is known as 'the poor man's cheque book' which is presented at the post office

## Figure in dress haunts farmhouse in Thorney – 1907

FOR many years a weird figure, clad in a red chintz dress, has haunted a farmhouse on the Thorney estate in the Fens.

During the creepy hours of the night, it appeared in one particular bedroom and pointed a long, lean finger to a roof.

Sometimes it made a rattling noise. Then it vanished.

The house was long occupied by the Caves, a noted Fen family. Now a new tenant investigating the beams above the room has found, secreted there, the will of John Caves, made in 1797, relating to an estate worth about £10,000.

Probably, the mystic lady's perambulations will now cease.

## Safety concerns of a certain 'soothing syrup' – 1904

THE recent inquest on an old man who took a dose of laudanum sends a warning.

The tendency nowadays when any minor ailment calls for relief is to rely far too much on medicines.

Many of these specious remedies are not the innocent compounds their manufacturers claim and many a patent medicine is absolutely poisonous.

There is a certain 'soothing syrup' extensively used which will soothe an infant into the sleep of death; eight or ten drops answers the purpose, the child dying speedily with all the symptoms of opium poisoning.

Every year, 15,000 children are killed by soothing syrup and other similar preparations.

# Indiscriminate spitting and other bad habits – 1924

**SIR**, May I protest against the insanity and disgusting habit of indiscriminate spitting, and the inveterate noxious habit of dropping dirty pieces of paper and orange peel everywhere about the pavement?

And will the police also take steps to deal with the unspeakable nuisance in our crowded streets of the inconsiderate pram driver, whether charging or dawdling, which are a public nuisance every day of the week and, on Saturdays, maddening.

Why should these vehicles, which tend by fashion to become more and more ponderous and bulky, not be completely forbidden in the main streets and be relegated to the two feet of roadway below the kerb stones at all times.

**Pro Bono Publico**